

Members of the ALB Cooperative Eradication Program Team met with City of Rahway officials on Wednesday, February 16, to discuss the need to remove 1,400 more trees in the city due to the recent expansion of the quarantine zone.

The expansion was precipitated by the finding on November 10, 2004 of an infested tree in Rahway near the western edge of the existing quarantine zone. That tree included 13 egg sites and three exit holes. USDA protocol for eradication calls for the quarantine to be expanded by one-quarter mile if the infested tree displays exit holes, indicating adult beetles have emerged from the tree and may have infested nearby host trees.

It was determined that 1,400 high-risk host trees within the new one-quarter mile area would have to come down to ensure the beetle did not spread further. City officials at the meeting, which also included USDA, NJDA and NJ Forest Service personnel, indicated they would continue cooperating with the eradication effort in hopes of keeping the invasive pest from spreading. They are updating their web site and other information sources about ALB, and working with the NJDA to plan a public outreach session for early March. City officials were assured the removed trees would be replaced by as part of the reforestation effort.

As of February 16, 1,279 trees have been removed from the Middlesex/Union ALB infestation site. Of those, 462 were infested host trees and 817 were high-risk exposed host trees. Crews continue to work this week in the residential areas of Carteret.

Currently 11 program personnel from USDA APHIS PPQ, NJDA and NJ Forest Service are performing survey and regulatory activities in the Middlesex/Union ALB infestation site. Seven program personnel continue to perform survey and regulatory activities in the Jersey City Quarantine.

Program personnel will remain on-site during the tree removal process to address concerns from homeowners and to ensure operations continue to run smoothly.

Members of the New Jersey ALB Cooperative Eradication Program were the recipients of the 2005 New Jersey Department of Agriculture's Employee Recognition Teamwork/Partnership Achievement Award, for their work to control and prevent the spread of the ALB.

According to the award write-up: "Program staffs quickly mobilized and are working closely together with City and County agencies to control and prevent the beetle's spread. This multidisciplinary, multi-agency team is comprised of New Jersey Department of Agriculture staff, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection – NJ Forest Services staff, and USDA APHIS Plant Protection and Quarantine officers, who work together in surveying and carrying out an eradication program to halt the spread of the Asian Longhorned Beetle. This team is the model of interagency cooperation."